

POLREP #2
Somers BN Tie Plant (Proposed NPL Site)
Release of Creosote and Related Wastes
Flathead Lake, near Somers, Flathead County, Montana
Site #63, Case #85251

I. SITUATION:

- A. OSC and TATM spent the week of April 22, reviewing and being briefed on conditions at the Somers site. The Flathead Basin Commission, Department heads of the Confederated Salish and Kooteni Tribes of the Flathead Reservation and selected representatives of various local Federal, state and county organizations/units were briefed by the OSC - primarily on the relationship of the Removal Action and the ongoing NPL RI/FS process.
- B. A small pond of less than one acre in size and containing approximately 200,000 gallons of standing water lies in a marsh/wetland area 10-20 feet north of the Flathead Lake shoreline (the high water mark). The sludges under and alongside the pond (estimated to be 2,500 cubic yards) are heavily contaminated with creosote-related compounds to a depth of 1-2 feet. The sludges are an indirect source of groundwater contamination (local water table at 1-3 feet) and can be a direct source of surface water contamination if exposed to lake high water wave/erosion action. Visual evidence indicates past wave overtopping and erosion of the low, narrow piece of land separating the pond from the lake high water line. Visual evidence indicates the lake shoreline moved towards the pond several feet during the last lake highwater period.
- C. The lake is scheduled to be at 2890 feet above msl by June 1. The lake can rise to maximum elevation of 2893 anytime thereafter. Snowmelt/runoff will occur in June. The maximum pool elevation was maintained in the lake for only a three-day period in 1984. The pond elevation is approximately 2893 feet.
- D. The Regional Response Team (RRT) met at the Forest Service office in Kalispell on April 26. The Flathead County Commission was invited to participate in the RRT deliberations along with Team members from EPA, DOI, CDC, COE and Montana. The nineteen other people in attendance represented various other resource areas, the PRPs and the media.

II. ACTION TAKEN:

- A. Since the PRPs expressed willingness to perform or aide in the Removal Action, the RRT recommended moving the pond liquids and sludges away from the exposed location near the lake shoreline into secured storage on BN property north of the retort buildings, and backfilling the cavity to the level of the surrounding ground.



- B. In order to further mitigate the potential for harm from contaminants in the soils surrounding the pond, but not directly tied to the pond sludges by either close proximity or contaminant concentrations, EPA and the state specified that the Removal would also include temporary measures to protect the shoreline in the immediate vicinity of the backfilled pond from further erosion by the installation of a rip rap mat along the lake high water line. Also, to reduce the risk to the general public, EPA and the state specified that the general area should be posted with warning signs so as to warn casual visitors of the risk.

III. PLANS:

- A. EPA estimates that an Administrative Order on Consent (AO) will be signed by the PRPs on May 9. The AO will become effective as soon as it is countersigned by EPA.
- B. The OSC will chair a town meeting at the Somers school at 7:00 P.M., May 9.
- C. BN has spent the last week staging equipment and supplies in preparation for initiating the Removal Actions. BN, as an initial action, anticipates installation on May 9 of a double liner in pits to receive the material removed from the pond.
- D. Local media and public interest remains high. OSC requests 2-person team from USCG-PST respond to Kalispell/Somers by the morning of May 9. Team will assist the OSC in providing continuous Federal monitoring of the Removal and, as appropriate, technical advice to the PRPs during the operation.

IV. CASE PENDING:

Floyd D. Nichols, OSC
1700 hrs, May 7, 1985,

(0014b)